

of Representatives, that the Congress honors the 50th anniversary of the dawn of the space age; recognizes the value of investing in America's space program; and declares it to be in America's interest to continue to advance knowledge and improve life on Earth through a sustained national commitment to space exploration in all its forms, led by a new generation of well-educated scientists, engineers and explorers."

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. FEENEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H. Con. Res. 225, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H. Con. Res. 225 honoring the 50th anniversary of the dawn of the Space Age and the ensuing 50 years of productive and peaceful space activities.

Fifty years ago, only 12 years after the end of World War II, America was enjoying the unprecedented peace and prosperity that characterized the 1950s.

But on October 4, 1957, America was shaken out of its technological complacency. The Soviet Union launched a beeping 180-pound aluminum satellite into orbit. Sputnik's capability was a wake-up call because it represented a threat to America's national security and technological preeminence.

Our early space program was born out of a clash of ideals between civilizations and systems of government, but it reinvigorated our interest in science and technology leading to increased investment in both research and in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics education.

These investments contributed to a technologically skilled generation of Americans that has led the world in innovation and accomplishments.

Our leadership over the last 50 years has encouraged international partnerships that allow us to harness the imaginations and technical talents of many nations for the benefit of all mankind. There is less direct competition and more cooperation.

Today, about 60 percent of NASA's science missions and 100 percent of its human spaceflight activities are done in partnership with other nations. In the growing world economy, developing countries are imitating many of the values and traits that have made America successful, and we are adopting policies that promote education and investment in research and technology.

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They clearly understand the link between an educated workforce, technological innovation and economic preeminence. The new global competition for preeminence in science and technological innovation must be met with a renewed American commitment to research and to science, technology, engineering and mathematics education akin to that which followed the dawn of the space age 50 years ago.

Over the next 50 years, it will be more critical, and not less, that we re-

main world leaders. Our ability to shape our destiny and influence others will depend upon it.

Mr. Speaker, as we mark the 50th anniversary of the dawn of the space age, Congress recognizes the value of investing in America's space program and declares that it is in America's interests to continue to advance knowledge and to improve life on Earth through a sustained national commitment to space exploration in all of its forms, led by a new generation of well-educated scientists, engineers and explorers.

I thank the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. Speaker, with that, I have no further speakers, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. LAMPSON. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers and I thank the gentleman from Florida. I thank him for his comments, they were excellent, and certainly want to commend all of us who worked on this particular piece of legislation.

You know, in a thousand years, people aren't going to remember whether it was Sputnik or whether it was the United States or Russia or any other country that entered us into this space race that took us into a new age. So I'm very proud to be a part of offering this, and I thank the gentleman for working with me on it.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H. Con. Res. 225, which commemorates the 50th anniversary of the dawn of the Space Age. I would like to thank my colleague Mr. GORDON for his excellent leadership in shepherding this important legislation to passage on the House floor.

The year 2008 will mark the 50th anniversary of the dawn of the Space Age and the creation of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA). I support the resolution because it affords the Congress an opportunity to pay tribute to the extraordinary partnership between NASA and its 10 space and research centers.

Mr. Speaker, NASA has a distinguished history. The United States of America won the race to land a man on the moon and, thanks to the courage, dedication, and brilliance of NASA, America has continued to lead the world in the exploration of the solar system and the universe.

On October 1, 1958, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration began operation. At the time it consisted of only about 8,000 employees and an annual budget of \$100 million. Over the next 50 years, NASA has been involved in many defining events which have shaped the course of human history and demonstrated to the world the character of the people of the United States.

Many of us remember how inspired we were when, on May 25, 1961, President John F. Kennedy proclaimed: "I believe this Nation should commit itself to achieving the goal, before this decade is out, of landing a man on the moon and returning him safely to earth. No single space project in this period will be more impressive to mankind, or more important for the long-range exploration of space; and none will be so difficult or expensive to accomplish."

Always at the forefront of technological innovation, NASA has been home to countless

"firsts" in the field of space exploration, from the 1958 launch of Pioneer 3, the first U.S. satellite to ascend to an altitude of 63,580 miles, to the January 1998 signing of the International Space Station agreement between 15 countries, establishing the framework for cooperation among partners on the design, development, operation, and utilization of the Space Station.

Over the past 50 years, NASA's accomplishments have included:

On 20 February, 1962, John Glenn became the first American to circle the Earth, making three orbits in his *Friendship 7* Mercury spacecraft.

On 6 April, 1965, the United States launched Intelsat I, the first commercial satellite (communications), into geostationary orbit.

On 13 November, 1971, the United States launched Mariner 9, the first mission to orbit another planet (Mars).

On 12 April, 1981, NASA launched the space shuttle *Columbia* on the first flight of the Space Transportation System (STS-1).

On 18 to 24 June, 1983, NASA launched space shuttle *Challenger* (STS-7) carrying three mission specialists, including Sally K. Ride, the first woman astronaut. In another historic mission, 2 months later NASA launched STS-8 carrying the first black American astronaut, Guion S. Bluford.

On 22 July, 1999, the space shuttle *Columbia's* 26th flight was led by Air Force COL Eileen Collins, the first woman to command a Shuttle mission.

On July 20, 1969, *Apollo 11* astronauts Neil A. Armstrong and Edwin E. Aldrin made the first lunar landing mission while Michael Collins orbited overhead in the Apollo command module. Armstrong set foot on the surface, telling the millions of listeners that it was "one small step for man—one giant leap for mankind." Aldrin soon followed him out and planted an American flag but omitted claiming the land for the U.S., as had routinely been done during European exploration of the Americas. The two Moon-walkers left behind an American flag and a plaque bearing the inscription: "Here Men From Planet Earth First Set Foot Upon the Moon. Jul. 1969 A.D. We came in Peace for All Mankind."

On April 24, 1990, the Hubble space telescope was launched into space aboard the STS-31 mission of the space shuttle *Discovery*. The Hubble has revolutionized astronomy while expanding our knowledge of the universe and inspiring millions of scientists, students, and members of the public with its unprecedented deep and clear images of space.

Mr. Speaker, in addition to these historic events, NASA has greatly contributed to our understanding of our universe. In 1968, *Apollo 8* took off atop a Saturn V booster from the Kennedy Space Center for a historic mission to orbit the Moon. As *Apollo 8* traveled outward, the crew focused a portable television camera on Earth and for the first time humanity saw its home from afar, a tiny, lovely, and fragile "blue marble" hanging in the blackness of space.

This transmission and viewing of Earth from a distance was an enormously significant accomplishment and united the Nation at a time when American society was in crisis over Vietnam, race relations, urban problems, and a host of other difficulties.